

State Representative **Ryan Dvorak**



Statehouse Report



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INDIANA'S BROKEN BUDGET



Every two years, the Legislature is required to pass a budget for the state of Indiana. I voted against the Budget Bill this year because it is a step back for our state. **It raises property taxes by \$1 BILLION**, and at the same time, **cuts education funding** to 140 school districts—here in St. Joseph County and across Indiana.

Shortchanging Students

...bigger class sizes, cuts in programs, and fewer resources.

The new budget gives 237 school corporations less funding than the rate of inflation. As a result, **academic programs will be cut, class sizes will increase, and teachers will be laid off**. This will force many Indiana schools into improvement categories that could lead to even more state and federal sanctions.

Raising Taxes

...shifting the tax burden and breaking the promise to keep property taxes down.

Since 1990, the Property Tax Replacement Credit (PTRC) has been used to help reduce homeowners'

property tax bills. When Indiana's sales tax was increased from 5% to 6%, taxpayers were promised the additional funds would be targeted to offset property tax increases. However, this new budget caps that credit, forcing a shift in hundreds of millions of dollars in tax increases to local cities, towns, counties, libraries, and schools.

Without promised PTRC funds for property tax relief, local governments will be forced to either cut essential services like public safety and road repairs, or raise property taxes.

A More Responsible Way

Indiana needs a bipartisan approach to equalizing the tax burden and reducing our reliance on property taxes. I will continue to fight for lower taxes while maintaining adequate education and health care funding to provide for the future of our state.

**"I will
continue
to
fight for
lower
taxes."**

Fighting Crime

I am proud to have voted for bipartisan bills that help fight crime, track criminals, and assist victims.

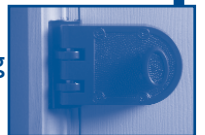
SB 13 requires all convicted felons to submit a DNA sample to the statewide DNA database.

SB 164 requires all offenders with prior child pornography convictions to register as sex offenders.

SB 175 allows courts to monitor offenders on home detention with GPS tracking devices.

SB 230 establishes a system to notify a victim by telephone of any changes in their offender's status, escape, or release.

SB 444 creates a comprehensive program to combat the spread of methamphetamine in Indiana.



Interim Study Committees

Even though the Legislature has adjourned, we are continuing to work on critical issues that face the state. **I have been appointed to six Interim Study Committees** that are taking an in-depth look at future policy opportunities.

The **Committee on Eminent Domain** is charged with examining Indiana law regarding the taking of private property for commercial purposes in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Kelo v. New London*. We are working to ensure that homeowners are not threatened with eminent domain just because someone thinks their neighborhood might be a good location for a new strip mall.

The **Environmental Quality Service Council** includes members of the public from different industry and environmental interests, as well as legislators. Working together, we try to find solutions that guarantee clean air, clean water, and healthy, safe communities for Hoosier families.

I am also able to work on these issues as a member of the **Environmental Crimes Task Force**.

The **Sentencing Policy Study Committee** and the **Commission on Courts** are charged with improving the functionality and accessibility of our judicial system and ensuring that justice is properly served in criminal courts and prisons.

Finally, the **Regulatory Flexibility Committee** examines regulatory issues related to public utilities, like electric, gas, and phone service.

Let me know if there is anything that should be brought to my attention while the committees meet this year. For more information on all Interim Committees, please feel free to visit <http://www.in.gov/legislative/interim/>.



Bipartisan Accomplishments

It is always my goal to get beyond the partisan bickering and work with all sides to pass common-sense legislation. This year I am proud to be a co-author of six bipartisan bills that became law.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT

- **HB1653**, the "Shovel Ready" site selection bill helps local communities prepare and certify industrial sites for development so companies spend less time navigating the process and new jobs can be created faster and cheaper.



- **HB1032** requires state vehicles to use blended biodeisel fuel to cut down on fuel costs and help reduce our reliance on petroleum.

- **HB1033** establishes a new program to help redevelop polluted "Brownfield" sites like the Studebaker corridor in South Bend.

CRIME AND COURTS

- **HB 1175** allows courts to order inmates to pay for their own medical expenses while in jail.

- **SB 47** cracks down on forgers and counterfeiters.

- **HB 1263** allows local courts to participate in Alternative Dispute Resolution for domestic relations cases.



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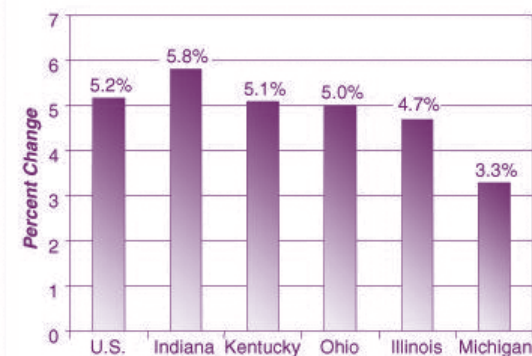
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INDIANA ON THE REBOUND

Despite the trouble that the national economy has seen in the past few years, Indiana is showing signs of economic strength, especially when compared to neighboring states. These charts show Hoosiers' personal income is on the rise and that our tax burden per capita is lower than in surrounding states.

Personal Income Growth 2003-2004

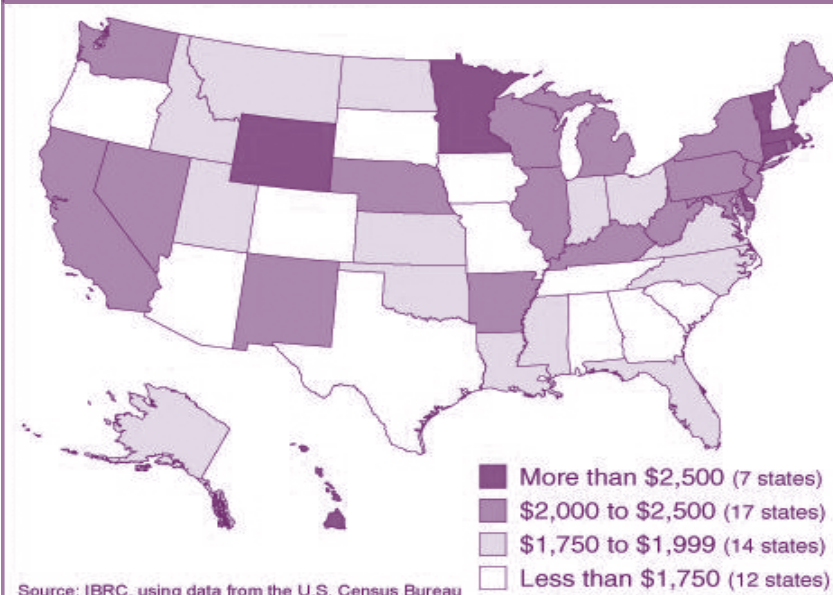
Indiana has outperformed its neighbors recently



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Per Capita Taxes 2004

Indiana ranked 30th at \$1,917



Source: IBRC, using data from the U.S. Census Bureau

Graphics obtained from: www.incontext.indiana.edu

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